

PROPOSAL FOR A RECORDS DECLASSIFICATION UNIT

Executive Summary

1 The demands placed upon the Agency as a consequence of requests, levied in accordance with the provisions of E.O. 11652 and the Freedom of Information Act, have been considerable, and experience indicates that such requests are growing in volume. If and when the Agency undertakes the systematic declassification review of 30-year-old documents in its custody, and this action is required under the provisions of E.O. 11652, the drain on Agency resources will be immeasurably increased. Agency policy thus far has called for individual components to be responsible for the declassification of records produced by them or by their predecessor organizations.

2 It is recommended that a records declassification unit be created and charged with responsibility for acting on behalf of the entire Agency in responding to ad hoc requests for the declassification and release of documents and in conducting the mandatory 30-year review of classified records. A specialized unit, provided with authoritative guidelines for making declassification and downgrading judgments, should be able to accomplish the task more expeditiously, efficiently, and with greater consistency than could be anticipated if the function were to be decentralized--and with less disruption of normal work routines.

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3 It is recommended that a [redacted] [redacted] declassification unit, augmented by [redacted] additional professional employees on two-year rotation assignments (one from each directorate), be established as a branch of a new organization, the Information Control Staff, which would be comprised of the Special Assistant for Information Control and the Agency components now reporting, formally or informally, to him. The Information Control Staff, it is proposed, would be located organizationally either in the Office of the DCI or in the Deputy Directorate for Management and Services. Its other components would consist of the already existing Records Administration Branch, the Agency Archives, the Agency Records Center, and the Historical Staff--all of which are concerned in one way or another with the generation of records, their selection for preservation, their declassification, and their utilization for purposes of historical research.

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Problem

4 The Agency has implemented a program for processing ad hoc requests for the release of records under E.O. 11652 or the Freedom of Information Act, and the procedures to be followed were duly published in the Federal Register. It has been in operation now for several months and, though somewhat cumbersome, has been proven workable. Experience has shown, however, that the method of responding to these requests has been both expensive and time-consuming, entailing successive reviews of the material at several desk, management, and staff levels. Thus far, the desk officers and other personnel involved have probably regarded the demands made upon their time as now worse than a nuisance, but, if the volume of such requests should grow dramatically--and there seems to be a trend in that direction--continued reliance on the current procedures could result in serious disruptions in the daily work routines of Agency personnel. A further centralization of declassification and release responsibilities within the Agency would permit a streamlining of procedures, with the benefits of overall manpower savings and the expediting of responses. Greater consistency in applying Agency declassification criteria would also result.

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5 Both E.O. 11652 and the implementing Agency regulation call for the review for declassification purposes of all classified materials prior to their becoming 30 years of age. Though not established until 1947, the Agency, as the successor organization, is the responsible declassification authority for sizable quantities of records, originated by the OSS, which are already 30 years of age or rapidly approaching that threshold. Three annuitants have been placed under contract and detailed to the National Archives to undertake the declassification review of the more than 900 cubic feet of OSS materials (primarily R&A Branch records) deposited there by the Department of State, but no plans have been developed thus far for taking similar action with respect to the much larger group of OSS-SSU records still in the custody of the Agency, or the CIG and early CIA materials which will become 30 years of age before the end of the decade. In addition, numerous other documents of OSS origin are being uncovered in the Presidential Libraries or in other National Archives record groups, and these will eventually be referred to the Agency for declassification review. An Agency program to handle the significant workload posed by the newly established government-wide declassification policies should be developed without further delay.

Centralization vs. Decentralization

6 The Central Intelligence Agency, in order to provide a greater measure of protection for sensitive intelligence sources and methods, maintains its own archival facility for the preservation of records of enduring value. The bulk of the

Federal Government's classified records, however, has been transferred to the National Archives and Records Service by the time that they are 30 years old, and the Archivist of the United States, subject to guidelines provided by the various agencies of origin, is responsible under E.O. 11652 for systematic declassification review of the National Archives' classified holdings. It is perhaps significant that the Archivist, rather than dispersing the responsibility among the several custodial divisions, elected to establish a special unit, the Records Declassification Division, to carry out this new function.

7 Decentralization of responsibility for declassification review, while certainly workable for the comparatively few documents involved in ad hoc requests, would appear to be unsound from a management standpoint when one considers the huge quantity of records to be examined under the 30-year provision. The problems--administrative control, policy guidance, logistics, intra- and interagency coordination, and production schedule deadlines--would be mind-boggling. Eligible records would have to be identified and retrieved from the records storage facility, with chargeout cards inserted in their place; an attempt would have to be made to match up extant components' functional responsibilities with those that existed 30 years ago; the record series would then be allocated to various major components, where they would again be broken up successively at the office, division, branch, and desk levels; at the action level, individual documents or file units would be reviewed by hundreds, or even thousands, of individuals who, performing in relative isolation from others engaged in the same task, would make their necessarily subjective interpretations of declassification criteria; and somehow lists of documents which required continued protection would have to be compiled and consolidated for the approval of the DCI, and the documents would have to be appropriately marked, collected, returned to the Agency Archives, and there rearranged in the original file order. The process would be difficult to monitor and the results could be catastrophic: documents might be lost, mutilated, or destroyed; declassification deadlines might be missed; because of the inexperience of the reviewers, sensitive information might be disclosed prematurely; regular work routines would be interfered with; ad inf.

8 Centralizing responsibility for declassification review in a central unit would have certain disadvantages. There would be some loss of expertise, but, in the case of the older records, it would be easy to overemphasize this factor. In addition, records-producing components would look with disfavor on the prospect of losing control over their own materials. They would be free to suggest guidelines, of course, but these could never be detailed enough to cover all contingencies.

9 The advantages of utilizing a central unit for handling ad hoc requests and carrying out the comprehensive declassification review of 30-year-old records would appear to be numerous, particularly

so for the latter program. Some [of the] likely benefits which readily come to mind are:

1. It would minimize the need for disrupting the regular work routines of line desk officers, although they would still have to be consulted on certain unusual problems.
2. Full-time declassification officers would quickly develop procedural knowhow and expertise. They would become thoroughly familiar with the criteria governing declassification decisions and readily recall precedents. They would recognize situations requiring interagency concurrences and know the correct channels to use.
3. Assuming that the members of the declassification unit would be experienced officers of good judgment who were selected in part because of their broad knowledge of Agency missions, the staff would collectively bring more substantive expertise to bear upon declassification decisions than any one individual could be expected to command. This would be of particular importance in reviewing finished studies, which are normally based on raw information from a wide variety of sources.
4. A centralized operation should be more efficient and less costly. Experienced, full-time declassifiers could work faster and with less indecision than novices, maintaining production goals for the 30-year-old materials and expediting responses to ad hoc requests for more recent documents. The present tendency toward repetitious reviews by desk officers, supervisors, staff officers, and Agency management would probably be minimized, resulting in the saving of a considerable amount of high-priced manpower in processing ad hoc requests.
5. The centralization of declassification responsibility would simplify recordkeeping problems, e.g., keeping track of manpower and other expenses incurred in responding to requests under E.O. 11652 and the Freedom of Information Act and recording and maintaining records of all declassification decisions.
6. With a centralized system, a greater measure of control could be exercised over the handling and care of documents. Responsibilities for particular documents would be clear-cut, and, if deemed desirable, officers working on the 30-year review program could work on-site at the Agency Archives in order to avoid disrupting the file sequence of those series that have already been systematically arranged.
7. Other benefits and efficiencies which might be expected

to result from a full-time, mass production operation would be the development of useful reference files, the use of forms, where appropriate, and resort to standardized correspondence.

Procedures: Ad Hoc Declassification Requests

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An Agency procedure for handling document requests received under E.O. 11652 or the Freedom of Information Act has been developed and promulgated as Annex A of [] It was also published, as required, in the Federal Register. If a declassification unit were to be established, only a slight modification of the current procedures would be needed. Once the documents responsive to the request had been located, members of the declassification unit would conduct the review, consulting with area and subject matter specialists only as deemed necessary. A decision would be made to continue, modify, or remove the classification, depending upon the sensitivity of its contents. If declassified, the document would then be examined in terms of the exemptions specified in the Freedom of Information Act. The Special Assistant for Information Control would make the final decision on whether the document should be released, with the option of clearing precedent-setting actions with the Office of the DCI. In addition to his current responsibilities for coordinating document searches, preparing correspondence, and maintaining records of request actions, the Special Assistant for Information Control would be required to keep track of all expenses incurred by the Agency (labor, reproduction services, computer usage) and to determine an equitable fee for the services rendered.

Procedures: Thirty-Year Declassification Review

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The Agency is required by law to preserve "records containing adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the agency and designed to furnish the information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and of persons directly affected by the agency's activities." In addition, the National Archives has consistently ruled that records containing unique information of potential interest to researchers should not be destroyed but must be preserved indefinitely. Some of the materials retained beyond 30 years, e.g., personnel records, are kept for a fixed period of time rather than indefinitely. They are not regarded as archival in the sense that they would be accessioned by the National Archives and be made available to the public. Indeed, even if unclassified, records of this nature would be withheld from public scrutiny under the exclusions of the Freedom of Information Act. In short, not all 30-year-old records held by the Agency need be reviewed for declassification purposes, but only those materials of sufficient historical or other value to warrant permanent preservation.

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Thirty-year-old materials dated prior to 1 June 1972 do not automatically become declassified on attaining that age,

but only after a review has been conducted and it has been determined that continued classification is unwarranted. The National Security Council directive, dated 17 May 1972, implementing E.O. 11652, in reference to classified material dated after the effective date of E.O. 11652, states that the declassified information and material shall be made available to the public to the extent permitted by law. Earlier material is not mentioned in this context, but the inference is that this material should also be made accessible to the public once it becomes declassified. Inasmuch as security factors and other considerations would preclude the Agency from offering research and reference services directly to the public, declassified records should be offered to the National Archives for accessioning.

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Unless an entire series of records can be declassified as a body--and this will seldom be the case--the original materials should be retained by the Agency Archives, with copies going to the National Archives. Documents have an organic relationship to one another; an individual document acquires meaning only when considered in relation to what preceded and followed it in the series. It is fundamental to good archival practices that records be arranged according to the organization which originated them, that logical series be grouped together, and that insofar as possible the original file order be preserved. By thus maintaining the integrity of the total body of records, the interests of serious researchers are better served. When the time comes that an entire group of records, such as the OSS-SSU materials, can be declassified, the original file should then be transferred intact to the National Archives.

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The oldest materials in the Agency's custody, the OSS-SSU records, are currently deposited in the Agency Records Center, rather than being in the Agency Archives. A portion of the OSS-SSU materials is stored in Headquarters Building. As the screening and declassification review of these records is completed, those appraised as having enduring value should be transferred to the Agency Archives, arranged, and inventoried. The early records of CIG and CIA origin are now in the process of being arranged by the staff of the Agency Archives, but there are undoubtedly gaps in the holdings.

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The following procedures would be followed in accomplishing the declassification review of 30-year-old materials. They are, of course, tentative in nature and no doubt incomplete, but they will nonetheless provide a general idea of the work steps involved. They were written with the OSS-SSU materials, the oldest records in Agency custody, in mind and would probably require modification when the time came to review later records.

1. Located the materials and segregate them from the other records stored at the Agency Archives and Records Center. This task would be the responsibility of the Agency Archives' staff, with the cooperation of SSU/ISD/DDO.

2. Working with logical subgroups or series (i.e., motion picture films, still photographs, maps, cable chrono files, the records of X division, etc.), the Agency Archives staff would then screen the materials. Records Retention Plans were nonexistent during World War II, and scant attention was paid to Records Control Schedules--if indeed the OSS had them. As a consequence, the OSS-SSU files contain a great deal of material which would have long since been disposed of under today's records management ground rules. The screening would include the following actions:
 - a. Guided by the provisions of the General Records Schedules, the Agency Archives' staff would separate out the nonarchival materials requiring long-term, but finite, retention (e.g., personnel files). These records should be returned to the Records Center. Consideration could be given to "class action" declassification, without item by item review, but, inasmuch as the records are nonarchival material, it would not seem to be required by the executive order.
 - b. Agency Archives personnel would also identify and segregate other series which are not of enduring value and for which there is no legal requirement to retain the records for at least 30 years. If such materials are covered by General Records Schedules, they should be destroyed as authorized. If they are not covered by General Records Schedules, but they fall into a category of Agency records, the destruction of which has previously been authorized by the National Archives, this should be used as a precedent and the materials destroyed. If, on the other hand, the records are unlike any generated by the Agency and there is no existing authorization for their disposal, Agency Archives personnel should propose their destruction via SF 115s and submit the requests to the National Archives for approval.
 - c. In the course of screening the records, the Agency Archives' staff should endeavor to identify selected series of low classification and sensitivity (e.g., the OSS-SSU file of still photography would be a possible candidate) which might be suitable for declassification without an item by item review. Members of the declassification unit would be detailed to the Agency Archives to examine and sample

any such series, consulting as necessary with area and subject matter specialists at Headquarters. If it is determined that "class action" declassification can safely be done, the records should be appropriately stamped, and, if the series represents a sizable, meaningful entity, consideration should be given to offering it immediately to the National Archives for accessioning.

3. Once the material had been screened on a series basis by the Agency Archives' staff, subgroups of records would be shipped to Headquarters and allocated among the declassification review officers, with due regard given to each individual's work experience and expertise. The declassification review officers would have been vested with the authority to declassify or downgrade records, and they would be provided with the requisite stamps and other work materials. Declassification guidelines, blessed by top management, would serve as their "Bible."
4. During the course of reviewing the documents assigned them, the declassification review officers would encounter some documents of non-OSS origin. These should be withdrawn from the files and replaced with charge-out cards. The withdrawn documents would be kept in the same box as the other records, but placed in a specially marked envelope. When a sufficient number of such items had accumulated, they would be sent to the agency having declassification jurisdiction for action and return. Documents which were originated by foreign governments or international bodies (but not including captured documents) would be held until such time as concurrences were obtained for their declassification.
5. The declassification review officers would read the documents of OSS origin, view the films, etc., and make a judgment regarding eligibility for declassification for each item. Borderline cases or cases not covered by instructions would be discussed by the declassification staff and perhaps with specialists elsewhere in the Agency. Top management would be consulted only when deemed essential.
6. The declassification review officer would be required to make a worksheet entry for each document reviewed, identifying the document, indicating the decision reached (declassify, downgrade, continue classification), the reason why classification must be continued (if this is the case), and a date for automatic declassification (if guidelines have so provided).
7. Each processed document would be appropriately marked

to indicate its new classification status before returning it to the filing box. For nonpaper record materials (microfilm, photographic negatives, motion picture film, and, for later records, magnetic tape), the container would be marked. In the case of roll microfilm it would not suffice to mark the container. Authority sheets—a copy of the worksheet would serve this purpose—would be filed in a looseleaf notebook and the record container marked in such a way as to direct reference personnel to them when the question of classification status arose. ^{current}

8. Unless a decision had been made to declassify an entire series of records and transfer it intact to the National Archives, each document which had been declassified would be reproduced and submitted for final approval before release. The approving officer would be the Special Assistant for Information Control or his successor in function. Top management officials at the directorate level or in the Office of the DCI could, of course, reserve the right to exercise oversight through spot checks. The declassified originals would be returned to their places in the file boxes, and the document facimiles, accumulated in logical groupings, would be offered to the National Archives where they would be accessible to the public. The copies transferred to the National Archives should probably be stamped in such a manner as to indicate that they were not record copies; otherwise, confusion would ensue years later when the original file was accessioned by National Archives.
9. A clerk would have the task of consolidating data from the classification review officers' worksheets, compiling lists of all documents which required continued classification. The lists, which would cite the reason for the continued classification of each item and, insofar as possible, the date fixed for automatic declassification, would be submitted to the DCI for his final determination.
10. Files would be returned to the Agency Archives when declassification review had been completed. The Agency Archives' staff would proceed to arrange, describe, and inventory them, and also take rehabilitation action as required. (Some of the OSS-SSU records are ditto or thermofax copies and have already suffered serious deterioration.)
11. In arranging work schedules, the declassification review officers would give priority to servicing ad hoc requests received under E.O. 11652 or the Freedom of Information Act over the manpower demands of the 30-year review. If an ad hoc request involved a document which had already been reviewed under the 30-year program, the position would be taken that the

NO! IMPOSSIBLE
WORKLOAD

mandatory 10-year review had already been completed and the declassification exercise would not have to be repeated.

12. In arranging CIG and CIA records in the Agency Archives, the staff should bear in mind the 30-year declassification review requirement. The system of arrangement should be such that identification and retrieval of records approaching the 30-year threshold will be facilitated. To minimize the impact that declassification review would have on organized and arranged archival holdings and to avoid unnecessary shifting of materials, consideration should be given to conducting future reviews on-site at the Agency Archives. This is not a consideration in the case of the OSS-SSU record materials inasmuch as most of them are still stored in unarranged form in records center boxes.

Organizational Considerations

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In considering the question of where a records declassification unit should be located organizationally and to whom it should report, and bearing in mind the administrative goal of grouping like functions, the position of Special Assistant to the Executive Director for Information Control comes first to mind. The Special Assistant for Information Control serves as Agency Records Management Officer, Agency Archivist, and Chairman of the Agency Records Management Board. He directs the activities of the Records Administration Branch, the Agency Records Center, and the Agency Archives. In addition, he has served as the focal point for coordinating Agency responses to requests for Agency documents, received under E.O. 11652 or the Freedom of Information Act, and for clearing publications (official histories, the State Department's Foreign Relations of the United States series, and book manuscripts) forwarded to the Agency for review by other agencies or by private individuals. While he has no direct organizational relationship to the Agency's Historical Staff, he informally supervises its work in the area of declassification, viz., reviewing manuscripts proposed for publication in unclassified form.

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The Executive Director's memorandum of 26 May 1972 (Subject: Information Control--Archives, History, and Records) stressed the close relationship of these programs to one another and the fact that the expected impact of E.O. 11652 and the Freedom of Information Act required the "fullest coordination of information control procedures." The Special Assistant for Information Control was created as a new position to effect this coordination, and the Records Management Board, which the Special Assistant for Information Control chaired, was charged with the responsibility of implementing the classification and declassification procedures required by E.O. 11652. Declassification is clearly his "baby."

18 With the abolition of the position of Executive Director-Comptroller, the Special Assistant for Information Control and the units reporting to him were left without an institutional home. Leaving these Agency-wide programs in the Office of the DCI would have some merit; the Special Assistant for Information Control works very closely with the Assistant to the Director, the General Counsel, and, on occasion, the Legislative Counsel on declassification and release matters. Moreover, being attached to the Office of the DCI would serve to lend prestige and authority to the function, a matter of no small importance when dealing with directorate-level officials.

19 Assuming that the function will be located elsewhere in the Agency, the logical place would be in the Directorate of Management and Services. An Information Control Staff or an Office of Information Control could be created, reporting directly to the Deputy Director. Another alternative would be to reconstitute it as a division of the Office of Management and Resources. The former solution would be preferable.

20 The component elements reporting to the Director (or Chief) of Information Control would be the present Records Administration Branch, the Agency Records Center, the Agency Archives, and the proposed records declassification unit. It is suggested that the Agency Historical Staff should also be brought under the same organizational umbrella. The source materials used in the preparation of Agency histories are identified as being of permanent value through means of the Records Control Schedules and Records Retention Plans; when the source materials become semicurrent, they are transferred on schedule for intermediate storage in the Agency Records Center; when the records become noncurrent, they are transferred to the Agency Archives for permanent storage, arrangement, description, and rehabilitation. The Agency historians are, or should be, among the principal users of the Agency Archives' reference services. In addition, it was noted earlier in this paper that the Historical Staff plays a role in the field of declassification review and that its activities in this regard were coordinated by the Special Assistant for Information Control. The Historical Staff, too, is left without an institutional home with the elimination of the position of Executive Director-Comptroller. It is proposed that, in view of the close relationship of functions, the Historical Staff be made a part of the Information Control organization.

Declassification Workload Projection

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It is extremely difficult to estimate the declassification workload over the next few years with any exactitude. The number of ad hoc requests for Agency documents varies from month to month (though there appears to be a clear trend toward a greater volume), and the requests pose varying degrees of difficulty. A request might involve only three pages of material or 500 or more. On at least one occasion, sanitized versions of otherwise classified documents were provided in response to a request (from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee) and this proved to be a very time-consuming chore. Up until now, records have not been maintained on the manpower devoted to declassification activities, and the exercise of merely tabulating requests received is somewhat like counting apples and horses.

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The task of reviewing 30-year-old records for declassification purposes is also difficult to size up with any degree of confidence. The volume of the oldest classified records in Agency custody, the OSS-SSU records, amounts to an estimated 6,675 cubic feet, plus 355 reels of motion picture film. The cubic footage figure, however, is based on the space occupied by the storage containers, and it is probable that many of the boxes are not filled to capacity. Moreover, as alluded to earlier in the paper, the total includes many records which could be destroyed or for other reasons need not be reviewed for declassification. The early records of CIG and the Agency present a more difficult problem. A quick survey of 1946-52 records held in the Agency Archives produced a total of only 1,524 cubic feet of records. Many classified records produced during this period are scattered throughout the Agency Records Center, and others, no doubt, are still in Headquarters files. To complicate matters further, many of the subject and project record materials are stored in file folder units whose contents span a number of years--1948-56, 1951-61, 1950-54--making it impossible to know how many documents were originated in a particular year without making an actual count.

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Responses to ad hoc requests for documents have often chewed up a lot of manpower. Correspondence, locating the documents and reproducing them, reviewing them in several components and at several management levels, perhaps sanitizing them, handling appeals--one can often account for 120-160 manhours for a single request, much of it high-priced manpower, too. The Agency was feeling its way in the early months under E.O. 11652, and a lack of precedents and sincere differences in opinion concerning what the Agency's posture should be tended to slow up the process. The substitution of a review by specialized declassification officers for that of the various desk analysts would have little impact on the time required for correspondence, etc., but the time required to complete the review and to make recommendations should be shortened considerably. A declassifier, doing a word by word review, can wade through about five inches of documents a day. To the extent that he feels compelled to seek assistance

from other quarters, his production rate would drop. In the systematic, box by box review of 30-year-old documents, the experience of the National Archives is that one archives box (about five inches of documents) a day is all that can be expected of a reviewer if the material is difficult, i.e., must be read in its entirety, with frequent rereading of guidelines. On the other hand, there are days when a reviewer will speed through his work allotment because the box contents are unclassified or include a great deal of material he is not authorized to declassify (foreign government material, other agency material, etc.) and perhaps get through 10-12 archives boxes. OSS and Agency records will probably require a very careful, and consequently slow, examination.

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The Agency has received at least 51 separate declassification requests since August 1972. It is significant that 16 of these came in March 1973. Some of the requests came directly from private citizens, but many more were relayed to the Agency from another government body--the National Archives (including the Office of Presidential Libraries), the Department of State (six of these requests were for clearances for the Foreign Relations of the United States issuances), the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army, the Department of the Air Force, the Department of Commerce, The Atomic Energy Commission, The White House, and Congress. The requests were addressed to a wide variety of Agency officials, i.e., the Assistant to the Director, the DCI, the Special Assistant for Information Control, the Legislative Counsel, the General Counsel, the Chief/Historical Staff, the Chief/ISD/DDO, the Chief/IRS/DDI. At least 22 were submitted pursuant to E.O. 11652. Only one requester seems to have based his appeal exclusively on the Freedom of Information Act.

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Of the OSS-SSU records, 1,866 cubic feet are at Headquarters, 4,205 cubic feet are in the Agency Records Center, and the Agency Archives has 604 cubic feet (still photographs, negatives, and caption cards) plus 355 reels of motion picture film. Approximately 1,500 cubic feet of the total consists of personnel folders. A thorough screening of the type suggested earlier in this paper might result in the destruction or "class action" declassification of a significant portion of the remaining records. Despite this, it is probable that 3,4,000 cubic feet would have to be carefully reviewed, and, to be on schedule, the review should be completed by the end of 1976.

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The CIG-CIA records for the period 1946-52 that have been identified include 511 cubic feet of finished intelligence, 563 feet of information reports, and 450 feet of subject files. It is obvious that a search would have to be made of Agency Records Center and Headquarters records holdings before the 1976-82 declassification workload could be quantified with any precision.

Staffing Requirements

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27 A conservative estimate of the manpower needed for the Agency's declassification program over the next few years would be [REDACTED]

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Assuming that the Special Assistant for Information Control (Chief of the proposed Information Control Staff) continued to handle all correspondence, recordkeeping, and certain coordination matters connected with the servicing of the other ad hoc declassification requests, the work involved in performing the actual declassification review and preparing recommendations would probably amount to somewhat less than one manyear per year. The mandatory 30-year declassification review will probably average out to approximately 1,000 cubic feet of records to be processed each year. Ten men, working 225 days a year and reviewing only five inches of documents a day per man, would succeed in completing only 937+ cubic feet a year. But this would be the worst possible case. If the work fell behind schedule, steps could be taken to augment the staff.

28 There should be enough clerical work to keep two clerk-typists fully occupied. After the reviewing officers had completed a box of records, the clerk-typists would be required to go through each box and, guided by the disposition indicated for each document on the worksheet, place the necessary markings on each item. Copies would have to be made of declassified documents for review and eventual transfer to the National Archives. Documents originating with other agencies would have to be packaged and transmitted to them for declassification action. Information pertaining to those records which would continue to be classified would have to be transcribed from the worksheets onto lists for submission to the DCI. When work had been completed on a bloc of records, they would [have to] be returned to Agency Archives.

29 Declassification review officers should be representative of the entire Agency. Ideally, they should be men of demonstrated competence and of sound judgment. They should have accumulated 10-20 years of Agency experience, with preference being given to those whose Agency careers had encompassed a wide variety of assignments. They must be willing to apply themselves steadily to a sometimes tedious and neverending task and be willing to accept full responsibility for their decisions. To obtain the services of capable personnel with this sort of background it will be necessary to offer an attractive grade structure. It is proposed that the branch chief (who would be expected to serve as a reviewer in addition to functioning as a supervisor) be a GS-15, with the declassification review officers in the GS-13/14 range.

30 It is proposed that a portion of the staff be composed of

staff officers on two-year rotation assignments from their career services. Of the 11 professionals proposed as the initial complement, seven would be permanent members of the Records Declassification Branch--the branch chief and six declassification review officers--and provide continuity to the unit. The remaining four declassification review officers would be "on loan" from their respective directorates--one from each directorate. The volume of documents to be reviewed will undoubtedly fluctuate from year to year, depending upon world events and the Agency's involvement. The use of staff members on rotation assignments will facilitate the expansion or contraction of the branch to match the peaks and valleys experienced in the declassification workload.

3/ In selecting personnel for the unit, consideration should also be given to the nature of the records scheduled for review. As noted earlier, the first records to be reviewed are the files of the OSS-SSU, primarily operational materials. The unit's professional staff should include at least one or two OSS veterans initially. The others should have at least a knowledge of intelligence sources and methods and some familiarity with OSS documentation.

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that a Records Declassification Branch be established with a professional ceiling of 11 officers (GS-13 through GS-15) and a clerical ceiling of two (GS-05). Four of the professional slots, it is recommended, should be filled by officers on rotation assignments.

2. It is recommended that an Information Control Staff be created in the Office of the DCI or, if that is not advisable from the management standpoint, in the Directorate of Management and Services. The Information Control Staff would include, in addition to the Records Declassification Branch, the Agency Records Center, the Agency Archives, the Records Administration Branch, and the Historical Staff.